

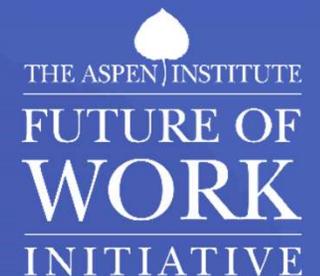
# The Gig Economy and the Future of Work

Massachusetts Future of Work Commission

Shelly Steward, PhD

Aspen Institute Future of Work Initiative

June 29, 2021



# Why the 'gig' economy may not be the workforce of the future

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER September 24, 2018

The Economist

Worries about the rise of the gig economy are mostly overblown

But it poses a challenge for tax and benefit systems

10/19, 10:20am

## Estimates Of The Shrinking Gig Economy

Wrong

Why the gig economy keeps growing

11/21/2018

Online gig economy is growing, but no one knows by how much

# The gig economy isn't going anywhere. 4 experts explain why

The gig economy is a small but growing part of the gig economy

QUARTZ

## Everything about the gig economy

By Dan Kopf & Alison Griswold June 7, 2018

This block contains a collage of overlapping article snippets. Visible text includes: 'Why the 'gig' economy may not be the workforce of the future', 'Worries about the rise of the gig economy are mostly overblown', 'Estimates Of The Shrinking Gig Economy', 'Wrong', 'Why the gig economy keeps growing', 'Online gig economy is growing, but no one knows by how much', 'The Gig Economy Rapidly Evolves', and 'By The Associated Press'. There are also some smaller text elements like 'but it poses a challenge for tax and benefit systems' and 'The gig economy isn't going anywhere. 4 experts explain why'.

we knew wrong

# Why the gig economy may not be the workforce of the future

By The Associated Press Mon., Sept. 24, 2018

2,274 views | Feb 12, 2019, 10:27am

## The Gig Economy Rapidly Evolves



Michael Bernick Contributor  
Policy

Money Consumer Industry Life

# What Is the Gig Economy?

Subcontracted  
work

Temp agencies

Seasonal and  
short-term work

Self-employment

Independent  
contracting

App-based  
work

Permanent, direct-hire,  
full-time, year-round  
employment

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**1 in 10 workers**  
*as their main job*

**1 in 3 workers**  
*in any capacity*

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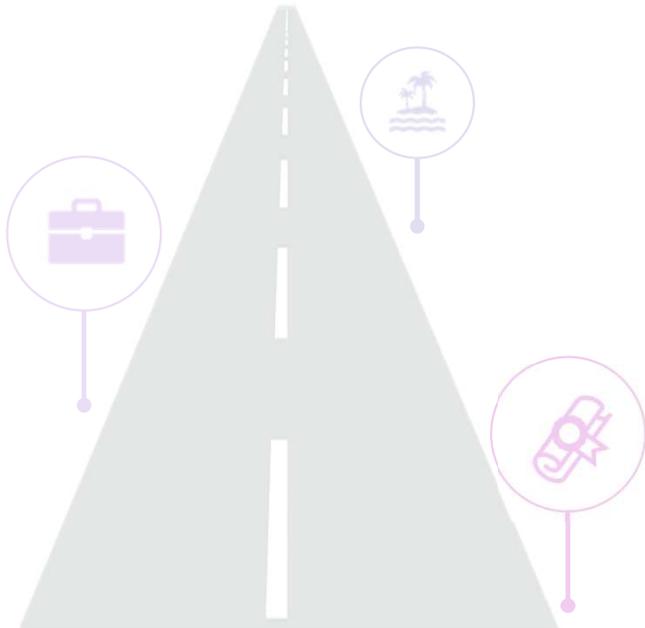
Permanent, direct-hire,  
full-time, year-round  
employment

**1 in 100 workers**

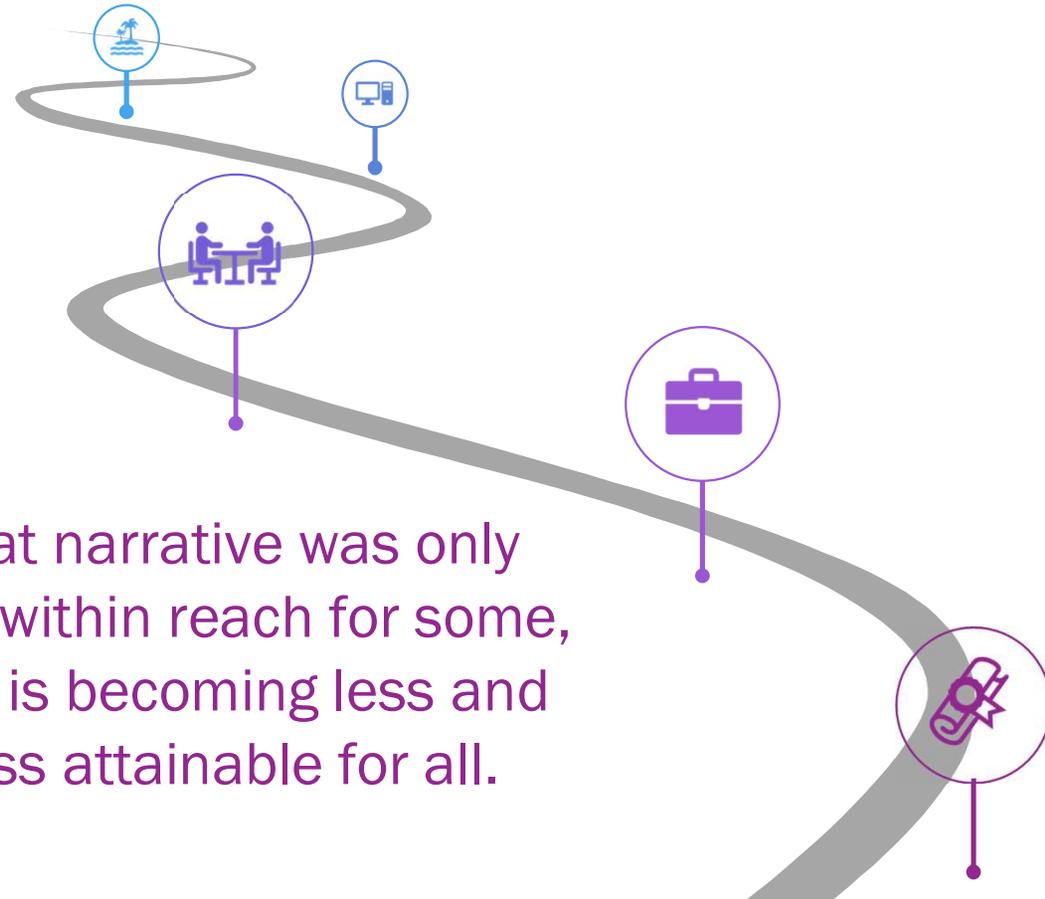
# Part of a broader trend

and long-standing reality

Our system of workplace benefits and protections was built around a narrative of a stable, linear career



That narrative was only ever within reach for some, and is becoming less and less attainable for all.



# Key Challenges Today

**Lack of  
stability**

Promote security +  
flexibility

**Few  
benefits**

Introduce universal,  
portable benefits

**Inadequate  
protections**

Expand and enforce  
legal protections

# Classification and the Gig Economy

Is classification important?

Yes

Is addressing it sufficient to solve the challenges we face?

No

So what do we need to do to ensure a bright and equitable future of work?

?

# Universal and Portable Benefits

Benefits that are attached to workers rather than to specific jobs, and that are open and accessible to all workers.

## Essential Benefits

- Paid leave
- Unemployment insurance
- Retirement
- Training
- Workers' compensation
- Health insurance
- Life insurance
- Student loan assistance

## Portable benefits are NOT...

- Different types of benefits for different workers
- Individualized accounts rather than risk-pooling
- Offered in exchange for workplace rights

## Existing portable benefits include...

- Social Security
- State family and medical leave programs
- State auto-enrollment IRA programs
- Domestic workers' paid leave (Philadelphia, SF)

# Rights and Protections

All workers deserve basic rights and protections that ensure safety, dignity, and voice.

## Essential Rights

- 
- Freedom from discrimination
  - Safe and healthy workplace
  - Minimum wage
  - Freedom of association

*Adapted from Goldman and Weil (2020)*

## Expanding rights and protections

- Include independent contractors in discrimination and wage theft protections
- Mandate equal treatment of temp workers
- Promote and protect organizing

## Enforcing rights and protections

- Require demographic reporting for temps
- Create and publicize reporting structures
- Consider algorithmic transparency

Flexibility & Stability

Portable benefits

Universal rights

*Enforcing existing laws*

# Flexibility and Stability

## Promote basic stability

- Transfers, credits, and supports can ensure basic levels of stability
- Goal is to facilitate work, not replace it



## Improve employer practice

- Uplift, incentivize, and/or mandate employer practices that promote stability and flexibility
- Predictable/advance scheduling and family friendly policies

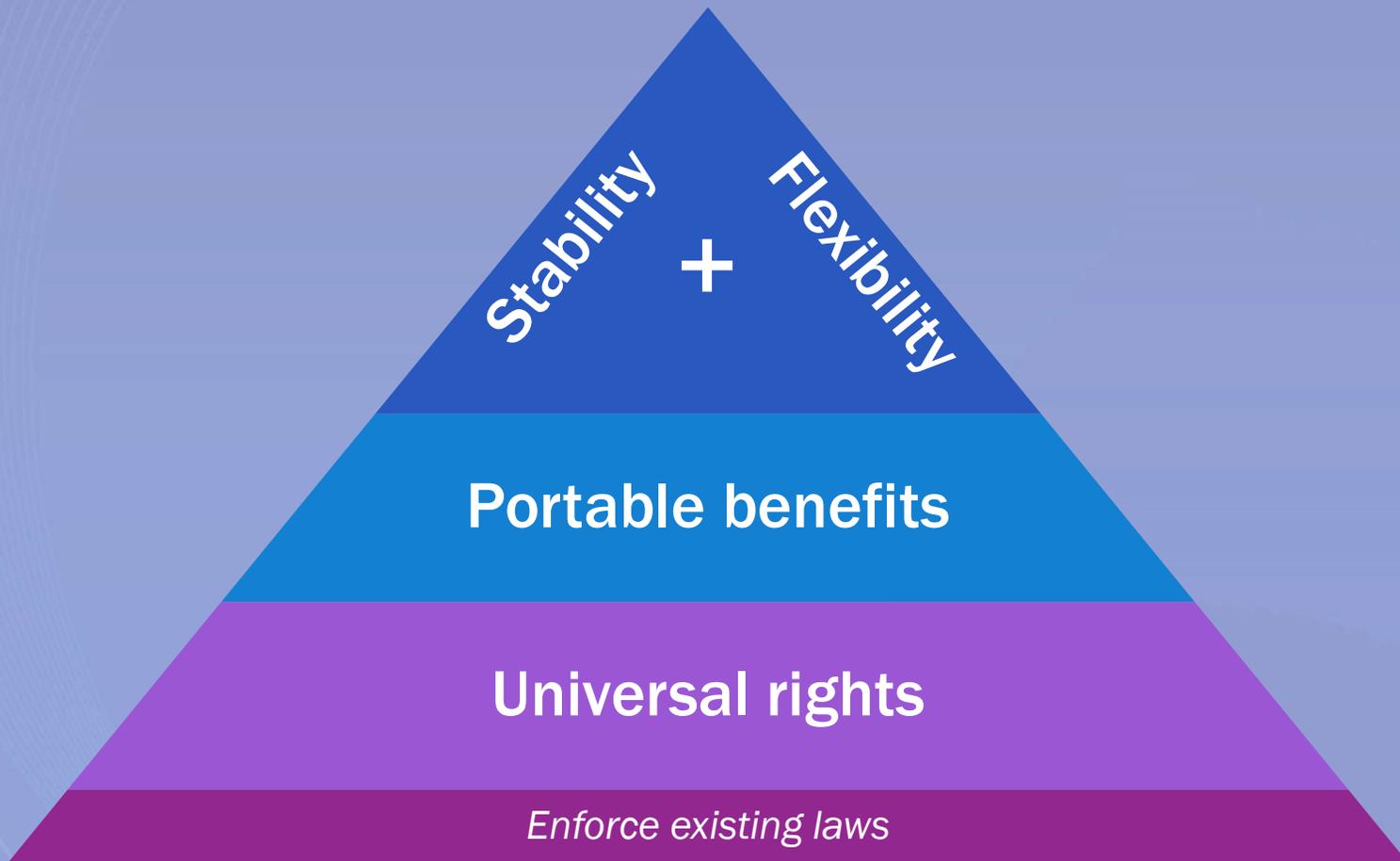


## Encourage transitions

- Currently, some jobs offer more flexibility and stability than others
- Workers need to be able to prepare for and access these jobs



# A Vision for the Future



# Thank You

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